

The Church of God

Great Lakes Mountaineer Region



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Great Lakes Mountaineer Regional



News

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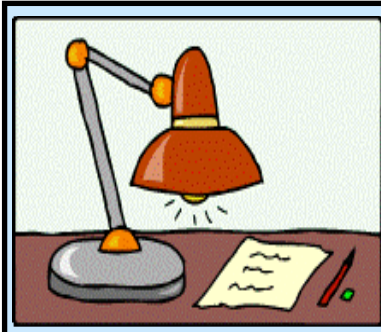
In

Michigan—Ohio—West Virginia

James T. Smith—Regional Overseer

Walter Lofton—Editor

www.tcog-glmr.org



From the desk of the
Regional Overseer
James T. Smith



Having Compassion, Making A Difference

The above sermon title was also the theme of our recent regional convention. The scripture on which it is based is:

Jude 1:21-23 (21) *Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. (22) And of some have **compassion**, making a difference: (23) And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.*

In the Gospels, several examples are given of our Lord and Saviour showing compassion.

He had compassion on those who were **hungry and needing nourishment**.

Matthew 15:32 *Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have **compassion** on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.*

Mark 8:2 *I have **compassion** on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat:*

He had **compassion** on those with **sickness and dis-ease**.

Matthew 20:34 *So Jesus had **compassion** on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.*

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Mark 1:40-41 (40) *And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. (41) And Jesus, moved with **compassion**, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, **I will; be thou clean.***

Matthew 14:14 *And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with **compassion** toward them, and he healed their sick.*

Luke 7:12-15 (12) *Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. (13) And when the Lord saw her, he had **compassion** on her, and said unto her, **Weep not.** (14) *And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, **Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.*** (15) *And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.**

He had **compassion** on those who were possessed or **afflicted by Satan.**

Mark 5:18-20 (20) *And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. (19) Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, **Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had **compassion** on thee.*** (20) *And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.*

Mark 9:22 *And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have **compassion** on us, and help us.*

But most importantly, He had **compassion** on their **spiritual need** – as sheep without a shepherd.

Mark 6:34 *And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with **compassion** toward them, **because they were as sheep not having a shepherd**: and he began to teach them many things.*

Time and again, our Lord has demonstrated his compassion. **Compassion** is a feeling that results in action. But the greatest show of **compassion** ever demonstrated is that which our Heavenly Father showed toward us in His willingness to give up His only begotten son to sacrifice Himself for us.

John 3:16-17 *For God **so loved the world**, that he **gave his only begotten Son**, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (17) For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*



The biggest heresy making the rounds these days is: “*Well, after all you can’t change human nature.*” That’s right, you can’t, but God can! Human nature is altered when the Adamic Nature is destroyed. It’s called Sanctification.



GENERAL ASSEMBLY

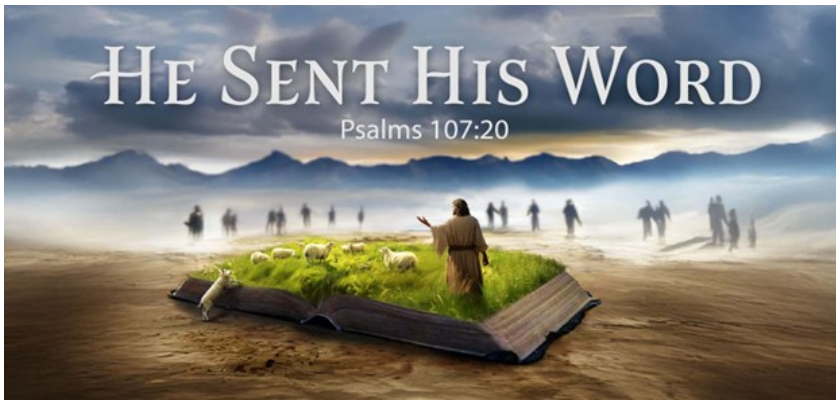
WORSHIP | FELLOWSHIP | BUSINESS

July 27-August 1, 2026
Westmore Church of God
2440 Legacy Parkway NW
Cleveland, Tennessee

MORE THAN A MEETING

You're invited to attend the General Assembly – a powerful and unifying international gathering of members from across the globe. Hosted annually, this sacred event blends Spirit-filled worship, meaningful fellowship, and essential seeking of Scripture to guide the Church's business for the next year.

Over several days, you'll take part in inspiring services, group meetings, and powerful moments of prayer and worship. The General Assembly is more than just a meeting – it's a time of faith, unity, and shared purpose. Come join us as we worship, work, and move forward together in Christ.



Annette Oglesbee
Regional
Sunday
School
Coordinator

The Call For Perfection

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matt. 5:48). Here the Greek word for perfect is (teleios) which means complete or mature, having reached its goal. Jesus tells believers to display love, grace and righteousness that goes beyond human nature, and to persistently grow, leaning on God's grace and complete work.

“Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:12-14). Paul said he had not reached spiritual perfection yet but he realized his goal and knew his ongoing need to grow in Christ. His motive for living a godly life was rooted in the work that Christ had already done.

Christians never reach a point in their faith where they can just float. Growing is a life long journey. Second Peter 1:5-8 tells us: *“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Even though we fall short, the Word of God reminds us that our strength and righteousness is in Him.

Paul said in Second Corinthians 12:9: *“...My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness....”* And in Ephesians 3:21 he said: *“Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”* James 1:4 tells us: *“But let patience have her perfect work that ye may be perfect and entire wanting nothing.”* In God's perfect will, even in life's hardships we can have joy and praise Him. Trials and tests build steadfastness which will ultimately lead to spiritual maturity. Count it all joy. We don't have to enjoy the suffering, but having a hope in Christ because we know God uses situations for His greater purpose which is always for our good. Testing of faith develops endurance. Faith grows stronger by relying on God in all things. Let patience have her perfect work so we may be mature and complete, not lacking anything for our faithful life in Christ. God's power is limitless and can accomplish far more than we can ask or even imagine.

It is truly a blessed life in Christ. To have a personal relationship with the Father through our Lord and Savior. A personal relationship that forgives our sins, promises eternal life, and the indwelling of the Spirit to guide, teach and comfort us in the corruption and gross darkness of this world. God is our steadfast source of peace and guidance. Through prayer and study of His Word and fellowship in attendance to services, we grow in knowledge and unity. There is joy and peace in His constant presence as we learn to lean on Him and seek wisdom from Him. Attend Sunday School and press toward the mark. Invite someone to come with you. Share the good news that this world so desperately needs. Let us all grow into the character of Christ so our lives reflect Him who is the light of the world. God bless you all and keep you in the peace that passes all understanding.



Ronald Robe
Regional
CPMA Coordinator

As I was thinking about what to say this month, I decided on giving you a testimony. When I was a very young man in my 20's I got to visit Fields of the Wood for the very first time. As I walked at the base of Fields of the Wood, I remember being fascinated with the 8 foot Ten Commandments on the mountainside. Later I came to the realization that West Virginia had paid for the eighth commandment, that rather thrilled me. As I worked my way on up I came to the Arise Shine marker, not really understanding all that this meant at that time, later I discovered in greater detail what it did stand for and what it represented !

I remember going up the Prayer Mountain and seeing the prominent teachings displayed even at that early age it blessed me. Something stirred in me tremendously, blessing my soul. We walked up the mountain to the top where Brother A. J. Thomlinson had prayed. We walked up the Ten Commandment mountain on the other side, stopping occasionally to enjoy the Word of God.

Don't remember if it was my first or second time that we found the all Nations Cross at the top, but I remember looking at the Witness Tree how the lightning had come down and went around the Church flag.

Also, I remember looking at the airplane setting there and how they first started missionary work in the Church. And thinking how blessed I was to be in this place.

The first year we went to the Assembly was the first year we went to Fields of

the Wood. Also, I remember M. A. Tholinson and how meek a man he was. In one of the business-sessions I saw him stand on stage and knowing the answer all along, while allowing a brother to catch up and get it in his mind what was being said and work it out more like a servant, not a dictator; how blessed it was to watch this.

But that first Assembly of so many people being there you were lucky to see the same person more than twice; there were just so many people. This was in the round building on Keith Street in Cleveland Tennessee.

We got to go and visit the White Wing Publishing House also. We saw Brother A. J. Tomlinson's shoes, how the toes were worn out from where he knelt and prayed.

As I look back now and see all the signs pointed toward the Church just sometimes our eyes are too blind to see I guess. We can talk about rocks in different places where they crossed over Jordan, where Jesus was buried, where the Church was founded—they still all point to the Church as one fold. Do you see her? I do!

Join the CPMA today. If you've already paid; pay for next year and get ahead. I remember going into one old pastor's home and heard he had all the CPMA cards framed from all the years he gotten them. He believed in Her. Join today—\$15.00.



Wanda Sutherland
Regional ABM
Coordinator

Greetings to everyone in Jesus Name.

May we always be mindful that we will meet our Savior in the air one day. Let us remind one another of his appearance. The bride wants everything to be perfect on her wedding day. She takes extra care and prepares so that she will meet her husband at the altar. One day our Bridegroom will come for us, and we will ever be with Him.

The ABM is a great blessing to the band members to help them prepare for that time. I remember when I was young and a lost sinner. I was at a friend's house, and their Pastor came by to visit them. He told me about a vision he had of hell and I decided then that I was going to give my life to God.

It turned out that I went to Church with them. I got saved and joined the church. Then I was sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost.

An Inspirational Mini Sermon

From the book, MUSE WITH ME by R. O. Covey

Governmental Restraint

What is a governor? Let's use an illustration. One kind of governor is a mechanical device for automatically controlling the speed of an engine or motor. It serves a dual purpose: (1) It protects the motor against an excess that could damage it by overheating or by vibration. (2) It protects persons, both those who own it and those who could become endangered in its path or from the sidelines.

But we are subject to other kinds of “governors,” not all of which are mechanically visible. However, their effects are visible, as are also the results when there is no governor.

An end-time sign is the cry for “freedom”—even by a take-over. The criers want all reins cut, leaving them free to run wild! No governor! No controls!

Sometimes we are told to forsake all traditions and customs—by those who are “liberals,” of course. But the Bible reserves the right to keep the “governor” or “control” on every “engine.” Some traditions should be forsaken because they are taught erroneously as the commandments of God. But a “control” Scripture says:

“Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle” (2 Thess. 2:15).

Numerous other Scriptures could be cited, “*Be temperate in all things*” is Bible advice. Sometimes it actually amounts to “total abstinence” when that is necessary for temperance, or self-control, or obedience to the Word. We would be “talking out of both sides of our mouth” if we should advocate “turning loose” all restraints, even in spiritual things. We can be deceived—by mistaking appeasement for victory—or “giving in” in the name of broad-mindedness throwing off tradition under the guise of “grace.” All such is double-talk.

Some have been saved from the fanatic destruction of “free holiness” by the government of the Church. We will always need this. And we will do well to “hold the line”—while we can!!!



Let's Keep Our Tabernacle Zeal Running High!

Walter Lofton—Regional
Tabernacle Booster

To date [May 31, 2026] our region has raised \$69,450.41 for our Assembly Tabernacle project. If you have attended a recent Assembly you know just how much we need that new Tabernacle! Let keep up the good efforts and try even harder as God permits and blesses us to raise even more for this worthy cause.

Some Can—Some Can't—Some Will—Some Won't

Which One Are You?



Bits of Wisdom From “the Preacher”

12 I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem.

13 And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith.

14 I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

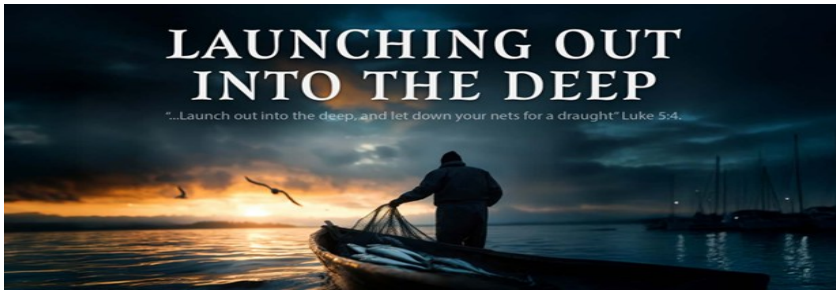
15 That which is crooked cannot be made straight: and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.

16 I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.

17 And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit.

18 For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

—Ecclesiastes 1:12-18



Alyce Silvia
Regional
BTI
Coordinator

I graduated from BTI this year. I can truly say I had a wonderful Spirit-filled two weeks in the Lord. I got to reconnect with some of the saints I met the last two terms and I met new saints of God all hungry for more of God. It's so inspiring to go and feel the fullness of the spirit every day, in the devotions, the classes and evening services. It is absolutely the fullness of the Spirit of the Lord. The Holy Ghost was felt so strong the entire two weeks, I'm sure heaven will feel this same Spirit, so sweet and peaceful. You truly don't know the peace you're missing if you haven't attended.

BTI had the privilege of going to 16 different places around the world this past year. They taught a total of 923 students. Wouldn't it be great to reach over a thousand students worldwide. We're really not that far off. I pray we are striving to meet our goal of \$2,700.00 in my challenge for the region. Help each other out so we can reach our goal. If you haven't given your \$5 extra per month, please do so before the Assembly. BTI is such a vital part of reaching out into the deep as Jesus said to do. Are we doing our part?

Life Is Too Short

To remember slights or insults.

To cherish grudges that rob me of happiness.

To waste time in doing things that are of no value.

To let past sins or mistakes cloud future happiness.

To miss making friends because I am too busy making money.

To give my youth to the devil and my old age to God.

To dream of tomorrow when I may never have one.

To put off making a confession of Christ now.

All I am sure of is now.

—Charles Sheldon



**Kandy
Saunders
Regional
WMB
Coordinator**

Having perfect love for God and for one another surely unleashes a 212 degree power that moves us to action, to do the work of the Lord and bring Him praise and glory. Let us pray for one another that we all have this, His perfect love.

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not” (1 John 3:1).

“Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us

not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.” (Luke 3:6-24).

As we continue to examine ourselves, may we meet all of these conditions and find ourselves identified as the sons of God according to these Scriptures.

Thank you for praying, giving and supporting the mission work.

God bless you!

—*Sister Kandy Saunders*

We must protect and guard the doctrine and when it is detected that there is the least variation from the correct way of putting the truth, or rightly dividing the word of truth, careful attention must be called to it by the proper authority in a manner that will set the offender right again. It will not do to become careless and let such important matters drift too long. In making corrections care should be taken to do this in the right spirit so that no offence will be given or taken. Teachers should also be careful about knowing the meaning of words in whatever language they are teaching. It is a common saying among us, “stick to the doctrine and win.” The doctrine we are to stick to is the Church of God doctrine. And this is not to be mixed up with any kind of false doctrine. Always steadfast for the right, and never surrender or weaken under any circumstances. We must rather be bold and powerful. Heresies shall be kept out of the Church of God and shall not mar the appearance of its beautiful face. I appeal to every lover of truth to become a mighty stalwart against heresy and a mighty guard for protection against he wrong.

—*A. J. Tomlinson*

Excerpt form the 31th Annual Address to the 36th Assembly in 1941



Sowing and Reaping

Sowing and reaping are natural (and Spiritual) necessities for a harvest. Jesus taught this principle both in parables and by His actions and instructions. He has sent us into all the world to preach (and teach) the gospel. In some instances we will sow and reap on “new ground” as the Apostles did. In other cases we will reap where others have already sown as Jesus spoke of in John 4:38: *“I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.”* For the most part, the “other sheep” are sowing the gospel seed, getting souls into the Kingdom while God is sending the Church behind them to get them into the Fold. We are laborers together with God and in the end there will be a grand final harvest when all the sheep will be gathered home. We are promised that *“...They that sow in tears shall reap in joy”* (Psa. 126:5). This tearful sowing will cause us to become weary but the Apostle Paul encouraged us by saying: *“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not”* (Gal. 6:9). He also told us: *“...He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully”* (2 Cor. 9:6). As **The Church of God** we should want and desire a bountiful harvest for our Lord and Master and even more so when we consider that some of this bountiful harvest may be our own family members. So, let us all diligently obey the words of Jesus when He said: *“Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest”* (Matt.9:38). These labourers take on many roles and wear many hats. Right now there is a critical shortage of Pastors in the Church. Pastors are ministering shepherds who are called and are willing to forsake all and GO where the need is and labor for this final harvest of souls into both, the Kingdom and the Church. Let’s all join together in prayer for this critical need in **The Church of God!**

“...By faith...”

A Story of An Empty Gas Tank

When I pastored my second Church an event took place that I consider a miracle. I pastored the Church in Charleston, Tennessee from August, 1983 through July, 1986. During this time there were three young men from the state of Kentucky who moved to the area and started attending our local Church. They would visit their family back in Kentucky periodically.

On one such visit their car broke down on the way back to Tennessee. It was on one cold February night well passed 10:00 PM when I received a call to come pick them up and bring them on home. The temperature was in the teens on this particular night. Money was scarce in those days and I was down to my last dollar. My car was almost on empty. The next day was pay-day and I knew I could make it to work (about 6 miles away) and then be able to buy more gas.

I got clear directions to where the stalled car was and told them I would be there in about an hour. The distance was about 45 miles away. I made sure they gave me the number for the pay phone they called me from in case I later needed verification of their location. I put the one dollar's worth of gas into my car and set out, reasoning that I could get the much needed gas money from them to get me back home. I started out on about one-eighth of a tank of gas and a prayer.

Yes, you guessed it, when I got to the location they gave me, they were not there. Somehow, they managed to get their car started and drove away without my knowledge. This was back in the days of no cell phones and they could not call me while I was on the road. [They could have waited for me, but being young and unthoughtful they just drove away.] When I got to the location I could not find them. I checked the pay phone booth nearby and verified that I was at the location from which they had called me from. There was nothing else for me to do but head for home.

Before I reached their location my gauge was already showing “empty.” I was already praying but then I began praying harder. I had a 45 mile trip ahead of me in the dead of night with the temperature already below freezing. I prayed all the way back to Cleveland [where I lived]. There was a convenience store about two miles from my house on the corner of the road my street turned off of. My car sputtered as I approached this store. They were already closed

since it was passed mid-night. I coasted to a stop right in from of the store and left my car in a parking space and headed for home on foot. My wife was worried and was waiting up for me.

She was not working at this time but was baby-sitting for a friend of ours. The next day, being Friday—the day she was supposed to be paid for baby-sitting; I was able to get five dollars from the lady whose child she was watching (on what she owed my wife) and rode with her to the convenience store where I left my car. When I got to the store, I manually pushed the car backward to the gas pump and put the five dollars-worth of gas in the car. To my amazement, the car started right up without any hesitation. This seemed unusual since the car had run out of gas and the temperature was very cold.

During the following summer one day I ran out of gas when my gauge was showing an eighth of a tank of fuel. I got some gas in a container and poured it into the tank and tried starting the car. It would not start. I had saved a small amount just in case I would need it to help start the car with. I poured a little in the carburetor [Thank God for old car technology] and finally got the car running

With all these events added together, it seems to me that what happened would qualify as a miracle. For me it was, for I came home on that cold night on faith through prayer. The hot weather episode along with the 45 plus miles of driving on empty on a very cold night proved to me that God was able to do abundantly above what we ask or think. I had heard of things like this happening to some of our pioneer ministers of the Church in years gone by, but never thought it would happen to me. It did, and to me it was a miracle since it came about through faith as an answer to prayer.

May we all take courage and exercise faith and trust God for whatever our needs and situation call for. True, God inspired, and biblically placed faith will not let us down. God's Word guarantees it!

—*The Editor*

Forces of Prayer

The spectacle of a nation praying is more awe-inspiring than the explosion of an atomic bomb. The force of prayer is greater than any possible combination of man-controlled powers because prayer is man's greatest means of tapping the resources of God.

—J. Edgar Hoover